

# **MS National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Academy Fact Sheet**

- According to a report released by the Alliance for Excellence in Education over 16,200 students who should have graduated in 2009 dropped out of school and will cost the state more than 4.2 billion over their lifetimes.
- In Mississippi, roughly 31 percent of students who entered the ninth grade fail to graduate leaving Mississippi with the sixth lowest graduation rate in the nation.
- The goal of Youth ChalleNGe is to significantly improve the life skills and employment potential of youth who cease to attend secondary schools before graduating. 266 students are accepted for each class.
- Youth ChalleNGe is an innovative and educational program that will give potential high school drop outs the discipline and direction to survive in today's tough economy.
- Youth ChalleNGe consists of a 5 ½ Residential phase, conducted in a military setting Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center, Camp Shelby, MS. The residential phase is followed by a 12-month mentoring phase. Total length of program is 17 months. There is no tuition and no military obligation.
- A twelve-month Post Residential phase follows in the hometown community. During this phase, a mentor, chosen by the applicant, will provide support to the youth while transitioning to home life and help hold them accountable for their action plan. Mentors should also be available to assist in finding suitable employment or pursuing further education.
- The Youth ChalleNGe Academy will be administered and operated by Mississippi National Guard personnel. Mississippi is one of 40 states and 2 territories who now have an active Youth ChalleNGe Program.
- All classrooms are equipped with state of the art computers to assist with academic excellence.

- To complete the Residential phase of the Youth ChalleNGe Academy successfully, each Corpsmember needs to meet competency requirements in the following Eight Core Components.
  1. Academic Excellence
  2. Physical Fitness
  3. Leadership/Followership
  4. Responsible Citizenship
  5. Service to the Community
  6. Job Skills
  7. Health, Hygiene, and Sex Education
  8. Life Coping Skills
- All students are issued uniforms along with physical training clothing. All students will adhere to student codes of conduct, standards of appearance, and program regulations. Students are required to march in formation to all activities while at Camp Shelby
- Students at Youth ChalleNGe will follow a rigorous and “challenging” daily schedule of physical training, academic work, and personal development perspectives; each day begins at 6:00 AM and concludes at 10:00 PM each evening; five days per week. Weekends are devoted to field trips and service to the community projects.
- Students selected for this program must be
  1. A volunteer
  2. 16-18 years of age
  3. Potential dropout from secondary school
  4. Citizen of the United States and legal resident of Mississippi
  5. Unemployed or under-employed
  6. Not currently on parole or probation for other than juvenile status offenses, not awaiting sentencing, and not under indictment, accused, or convicted of a felony.
  7. Free from use of illegal drugs or substances
  8. Physically and mentally capable to participate in the program in which enrolled, with reasonable accommodation for physical and other disabilities.

Further information concerning the Youth ChalleNGe Academy may be acquired by calling (601) 558-2300 or by visiting the MS Youth ChalleNGe Web Site at [www.msyouthchallenge.org](http://www.msyouthchallenge.org)